

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 04105 271330Z

11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 SAM-01 /079 W

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R 271246Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7309

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4105

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IS

SUBJ: COALITION MAVERICKS CHALLENGE GOI ON DEFENSE  
BUDGET

SUMMARY: THREE DISSIDENT KNESSET MEMBERS OF GOVERNING  
COALITION TOOK OCCASION OF ROUTINE PARLIAMENTARY VOTE  
ON DEFENSE BUDGET TO EMBARRASS GOI AND TO REMIND  
RABIN THAT HE CANNOT COUNT ON FULL SUPPORT OF HIS  
KNESSET COALITION ON ALL ISSUES. AFFAIR HAS NOT  
JEOPARDIZED COALITION'S SURVIVAL, BUT IT HAS HIGH-  
LIGHTED POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER PARLIAMENTARY SET-  
BACKS. END SUMMARY.

1. ROUTINE KNESSET DELIBERATION ON GOI'S PROPOSED  
IL 22 BILLION DEFENSE BUDGET IN RECENT DAYS HAS  
PROVIDED OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW PARLIAMENTARY CHALLENGE  
TO GOI. IN CLEVER MANEUVER, COALITION DISSIDENTS  
(BEN MEIR AND HAMMER OF NRP, TOGETHER WITH RAFT'S  
BEN PORAT) JOINED FORCES WITH LIKUD IN JOINT FINANCE-  
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 04105 271330Z

LEFENRE COMMITTEE JUNE 17 VOTE ON DEFENSE BUDGET TO

GAIN APPROVAL FOR RECOMENDING INCREASE OF IL 0500 MILLION ABOVE G REQUEST. DISSIDENTS TOOK UDVANTAGE OF ABSENCE OF NUMBER OG LABOR ALIGNMENT MK'S FROM JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING TO PUSH THROUGH THEIR MOTION BY MARGIN OF ONE, 18-17. BEN PORAT WAS ABSENT ON PURPOSE.

2. OBVIOUSLY STUNG, LABOR ALIGNMENT LEADERSHIP INSISTED ON RE-VOTE ON JUNE 24, UPSHOT OF WHICH WAS 43;3RSAL OF ERLIER DECISION 23-19 IN JIONT MEETING. IN PROTEST AGAINST THIS PROCUEDURE, LIKUD MK'S AND LABOR ALIGNMENT DISSIDENTS THEN WALKED OUT OF MEETING BEFORE FINAL VOTE REPORTING DEFENSE BUDGET BACK TO KNESSET PLENUM. AS RESULT, DEFENSE BUDGET--REPORTEDLY FOR FIRST TIME--FAILED TO OBTAIN UNANIMOUS VOTE. COMMENT : THOUGH THIS INCIDENT DOES NOT JEOPARDIZE SURVIVAL OF GOVERNING COALITION, IT DOES SERVE AS REMINDER THAT GOI LEADERSHIP ON OCCASION HAS HAD DIFFICULTY, AND MAY CONTINUE TO, IN ASSURING NECESSARY PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY ON CERTAIN ISSUES. NRP YOUTH FACTION AND CERTAIN ELEMENTS IN RAFI REGARD THEMSELVES AS A KIND OF PERMANENT OPPOSITION WITHIN COALITION RANKS (BEN PORAT MAKES A POINT OF RECALLING THAT HE HAD NOT PARTICIPATED IN ORIGINAL VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR NEW GOI IN JUNE 1974). THESE MK'S HAVE ALREDY FELT FREE TO BREAK COALITION DISCIPLINE IN THE PAST, IN VOTES ON UNAUTHORIZED SETTLEMENTS ON WEST BANK, THE MAALEH ADUMIM CONTROVERSY AND ON OTHER ISSUES. DISSIDENTS EXPLOIT COMBINATION OF CIRCUMSTANCES, INCLUDING FACT THAT ALIGNMENT'S KNESSET FACTION IS SMALLER THAN IN PREVIOUS KNESSET AND THAT OPPOSITION LIKUD USUALLY VOTES AS UNITED BLOC. MOREOVER, ALIGNMENT KNESSET FACTION INCLUDES 10 MINISTERS WHO DO NOT SIT ON COMMITTEES AND WHOSE OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES SOMETIMES PREVENT THEM FROM BEING IN CHAMBER FOR PLENUM VOTES. FINALLY, LABOR PARTY " STARS" SUCH AS EBAN AND DAYAN OFTEN GIVE SHORT SHRIFT TO THEIR KNESSET RESPONSIBILITIES. (EBAN'S ABSENCE FROM JUNE 17 MEETNG WAS DULY NOTED BY ISRAELI COMMENTATORS). VELIOTES

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 04105 271330Z

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY BUDGET, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 27 JUN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975TELAV04105  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750224-0649  
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**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 12 MAY 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <12 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <01 DEC 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** COALITION MAVERICKS CHALLENGE GOI ON DEFENSE BUDGET  
**TAGS:** PINT, IS  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006